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SUBJECT: ADB WILL CONDUCT A DAMAGE ASSESSMENT; NO
GOVERNMENT GRANT EQUALS NO ONE GOING HOME

11. (SBU) Summary. In a May 29 meeting with Ambassador, the Asia Development Bank (ADB) committed to doing a joint damage/reconstruction assessment with the World Bank of the conflict-affected areas. In order to properly conduct such a survey, ADB has requested assistance through satellite imagery, and Embassy will examine options for this request. FATA Secretariat officials reported to Peshawar Principal Officer on May 28 that the internally displaced persons (IDPs) from Bajaur and Mohmand agencies refuse to leave the camps until they receive the PKR 25,000 grant as promised under the terms of the Prime Minister's National Response Plan. The Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) cite government sources as reporting that the total number of IDPs at approximately 3 million to date, but all acknowledge that fraud and duplication in registration have resulted in inflated numbers. The Pakistan military spokesman announced that operations in Swat continue as Mingora is slowly being fully secured, and in a May 28 raid, the military recovered 12 UN-registered vehicles and a weapons cache. UN cluster members indicated that coordination remains an issue, particularly camp management and cluster levels. President Asif Zardari visited an IDP camp in Swabi on May 29. End Summary.

ASIA DEVELOPMENT BANK DAMAGE ASSESSMENT

12. (SBU) Ambassador met with Asia Development Bank (ADB) Country Director Rune Stroem on May 28 to discuss ABD's participation in damage and reconstruction assessments in Malakand Division and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA). Stroem reported that ADB and the World Bank received a request for ABD and the World Bank to conduct this assessment, and both agencies agreed. Stroem noted that the scope of their assessment will be to look at economic revitalization of the conflict-affected areas, but they will delink any examination of the civil administration from the economic survey because they believe that by including the civil administration for purposes of the assessment that its release will be slowed tremendously. Within the assessment, the ADB also plans to look at ways to build capacity through training officials on how to respond better to disasters and other crises of this nature. Stroem made clear that the ADB cannot commit its resources for an indefinite period of time, and, therefore, the GOP will need to learn how to control these assessment and reconstruction efforts in the future.

13. (SBU) Noting that the Embassy plans to send an assessment team into Buner on June 2 to examine law enforcement and

infrastructure needs, Stroem requested that the Embassy and ADB teams meet regularly to compare notes and information for clearer damage assessments. Stroem also requested assistance in procuring satellite imagery to gain better understanding of the scope of damage. Embassy will examine options for this request.

CIVIL-MILITARY COOPERATION COMMITTEE

14. (SBU) On May 28, Peshawar Principal Officer and other Consulate and Embassy personnel attended the monthly Civil-Military Cooperation Committee (CMCC) that brings together representatives from the FATA Secretariat, Frontier Corps (FC), and various political agents throughout the FATA. According to Habibullah Khan, the Additional Chief Secretary of the FATA Secretariat, plans are in place to fully clear Bajaur and Mohmand agencies of remaining militants in order to bring the internally displaced persons (IDPs) home. No time frame for the operations was provided. Khan reported that he had staff canvassing every IDP camp to find the Bajaur and Mohmand IDPs and to talk with them about returning; however, most IDP families are refusing to go back until they have the promised PKR 25,000 (approximately USD 300) in hand, as promised under the Prime Minister's National Response Plan. Additionally, Khan noted that the lack of donor coordination among the international community, including the UN, was making his planning for IDP returns complicated and difficult. (Note: Khan reported that he continues to receive several requests from various donors, asking for a return plan and promising money, but he is

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confused as to what, if anything, is actually being done and if these money pipelines are actually being created. End note.) Embassy will continue to work with the FATA Secretariat and the UN agencies in Pakistan to develop one, streamlined voice in regard to donor coordination.

UNHCR-PESHAWAR MEETING

15. (SBU) The Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Peshawar told Peshawar Principal Officer on May 28 that the newly registered IDP population stands at 2.5 million (314,000 families) with "transit" and "spontaneous" camps still to be accounted for. (Note: With the old case load of 550,000 IDPs, this estimate would put the UNHCR total IDP population at over 3 million IDPs. End note.) UNHCR Peshawar is increasingly focusing on IDP populations in these unofficial camps and schools. Numbers of civilians unable to leave Swat or Dir districts remains unclear. Bajaur and Mohmand IDPs, according to UNHCR Peshawar, are returning, which has freed up space at Jalozei camp (Nowshera district). Unexploded ordnance was found and cleared in an area of the camp where Afghan refugees had once lived. There are sufficient food supplies, but IDPs are angry over being forced to flee without their possessions. UNHCR Peshawar is exploring the procurement of individual stoves but must identify an appropriate fuel source. Communal kitchens have been rejected by IDPs because of tensions over mixing with strangers. UNHCR is helping Dera Ismail Khan (DI Khan) District Coordination Officer identify camp sites for outflows from South Waziristan. Numbers are conflicting, but most of those leaving now appear to have winter homes in DI Khan.

MILITARY UPDATE

16. (U) Militants continue to defend the main town of Mingora and nearby locales. A number of reports indicate that Baitullah Mehsud and other militants in North and South Waziristan are preparing to oppose an army offensive. There are reports of plans to attack police patrols, police posts, and container yards along the Ring Road in Peshawar. Taliban

militants continue to fire mortars and rockets at military posts in the Waziristans. Militant forces are reportedly massing in Mohmand Agency (FATA) to interdict lines of communication and attack FC garrisons. Militants continue to operate in Lower Dir and have the ability to mass for planned assaults against government positions.

¶7. (U) According to the Director General for Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), Major General Athar Abbas, reported that in the last 24 hours, 28 militants were killed and seven arrested in various areas of Swat while 5 soldiers and 2 civilians were injured.

¶8. (U) ISPR also reports that security forces continued with cordon and search operations and successfully cleared the stronghold of militants at Peochar village, Swat. Pakistan security forces destroyed militant hideouts, including one madrassah and recovered 12 UN registered vehicles. Four tunnels were reportedly discovered with ration items that had been stolen from relief agencies and a cache of weapons.

CURRENT CONDITIONS FOR IDPS

Numbers:

¶9. (U) Embassy continues to receive differing numbers on the IDP totals, but new and old caseload totals average still at about 3 million total IDPs. Embassy contacts report that various agency and district officials are encouraging their constituents, whether conflict affected or not, to register as IDPs for the purposes of receiving the free relief items and the PKR 25,000 grant from the GOP. Additionally, reports indicate that husband and wives are separately registering their family at different registration hubs in order to receive double benefits. The National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) assured the Embassy that it

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would have the registration lists scrubbed for duplications by next week and expect that once these lists are scrubbed that the overall total will decrease by 20 to 30 percent.

Return Package Grant and Disbursement:

¶10. (SBU) The GOP has allocated PKR 8 billion (approximately USD 100 million) out of the supplementary budget grants in order to meet its commitment to pay PKR 25,000 (approximately USD 300) to each IDP family. Although there are plans to disburse this money to IDPs via so-called "smart cards" (essentially microchipped versions of the traditional NADRA-issued ID cards that can be programmed for a variety of electronic banking and other services), their program is still several weeks, if not months, away from being fully operational. On May 22, after months of preparation, a small pilot project in Kacha Gari camp in Peshawar distributed smart cards to 400 IDP families. It is likely the GOP will turn to more traditional means of disbursement to process these payments in a timely manner.

Humanitarian Support:

¶10. (U) The USAID Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) urged NGOs to focus on meeting the immediate humanitarian needs, particularly of the IDPs outside the formal camps. The DART encouraged NGOs to coordinate through the UN cluster system, agree on respective geographic focus, and work with local NGOs and local authorities.

¶11. (U) NGOs discussed various strategies of providing support to IDPs through cash or voucher distribution programs. One NGO noted that such programming is very tricky to implement properly without substantial previous experience. Another NGO has begun a cash distribution program for both IDPs and host families through an agreement with a local bank. A third NGO is handing out 3,000

Pakistani rupees along with partial non-food item kits in Mardan district, but indicated that IDPs preferred full NFI kits without cash in Swabi district, perhaps as markets there are not functioning quite as well as in Mardan and other districts.

Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH):

¶12. (U) At the May 28 UN WASH cluster meeting, the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) noted that the organization is trying to improve information management by expanding the UN website and posting additional cluster information. The website is available at <http://unportal.un.org.pk>.

¶13. (U) Cluster members indicated that coordination remains an issue, particularly camp management and cluster levels.

¶14. (U) Organizations participating in the cluster discussed how to best prioritize WASH projects. UNICEF circulated guidance for comment that included the following criteria: The cluster should prioritize WASH assistance to formal and spontaneous camps with more than 100 IDP families, with the goal of initially providing assistance to meet 50 percent of SPHERE indicators for key WASH services and subsequently updated to fully meet SPHERE standards. The next priority would be IDPs in schools with little or no functioning infrastructure, with the same initial and subsequent goals. The third priority would be to target IDPs living with host families with acute WASH-related vulnerabilities, as determined by additional assessments.

Access to Food/Non-food Support:

¶15. (U) The World Food Program (WFP) reported that 52 percent of the registered IDPs was accessing food and NFIs at the 10 distribution hubs in Mardan district. WFP is currently assessing 8 additional locations to improve service delivery and increase the coverage percentage. WFP noted that the access percentage was higher in neighboring districts, including Swabi (90 percent), Nowshera (85 percent), and Peshawar (80 percent).

POLITICAL UPDATE

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¶16. (U) Media reports that President Asif Ali Zardari visited an IDP camp in Swabi district.

¶17. (U) Prime Minister Yousef Raza Gilani announced that the GOP had developed an "exit plan" for the Malakand operations, which included hiring recently retired Army personnel to bolster the depleted and demoralized police force. The operational commander in Mingora, Brigadier Tabhir Hameed, warned that after Swar was secured, the Taliban could re-enter the area. Hameed said that cooperation by civilians was essential to prevent a return of the Taliban.

¶18. (U) In Peshawar, hundreds of students affiliated with a student organization linked to Jamaat-i-Islami (JI), marched to demand an end to the military offensive in Malakand. The student leader, Atiqur Rahman, alleged that the war in Malakand was launched on "American dictation." He urged the youth to stand against the U.S. policies and protect their land. Sirajul Haq, JI's NWFP provincial chief, said those who picked up arms should use them against the U.S. in Afghanistan. Haq condemned the Awami National Party (ANP) and Pakistan People's Party (PPP), stating that the "people of Governor Ghani and demanding repatriation of IDPs to their homes, the leader of the Jamiat Ulema-i-Islam (JUI) Maulana Gul Naseeb also demanded the government to halt ongoing military operations in Malakand.

¶19. (U) NWFP Senior Minister Bashir Ahmed Bilour (affiliated with the ANP) gave a speech at Shah Mansoor IDP camp in

Swabi, attacking JI for its opposition to the Malakand operation. Bilour stated that this party had always played a negative role, contributing to the killing of thousands of security personnel and the millions suffering under the current IDP crisis.

¶20. (U) As Gilani urged Pakistanis to not abuse IDP supplies, reports circulated widely in Peshawar that IDPs from Swat were allegedly selling relief goods provided to them by the World Food Program. Police were investigating reports that dealers purchase relief goods at cheap rates and then transfer them to warehouses for sale on the open market. NWFP Inspector General Police Malik Naveed Khan said 50 suspects had been arrested from relief camps set up for IDPs from Malakand. Khan urged people to cooperate with law enforcement agencies to apprehend extremist elements.

¶21. (U) In Swabi district, a mob of IDPs, reportedly angered by the government closure of 12 out of 15 registration points, swarmed the only remaining registration and food distribution point in Kernal Sher Killay. The protest triggered the police to launch a baton charge at the IDPs.
PATTERSON